

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 011032Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2859

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 6000

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS DIA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, EG, IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI ACTION AGAINST AMOCO RIG IN GULF OF SUEZ

REF: TEL AVIV 5998

1. AS FOLLOW-UP TO LAST NIGHT'S MEETING, DATT AND ARMY ATTACHE MET AT 0800Z WITH IDF CHIEF OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND HIS DEPUTY, CHIEF OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE, AND DIRECTOR OF GHQ SINAI INTELLIGENCE BRANCH. CHIEF OF AIR FORCE INTELLIGENCE WAS ALSO CONTACTED DURING MEETING.

2. IDF STATES FOLLOWING WITHOUT QUALIFICATION AND WITH "ONE HUNDRED PERCENT ASSURANCE":

A. NO ISRAELI PATROL BOAT APPROACHED THE MARINER CLOSER THAN 2000 METERS AFTER 1700 HOURS 31 AUGUST. NO CONVERSATIONS WITH MARINER WERE HELD AFTER INITIAL REQUEST TO MOVE TRANSMITTED BY IN PATROL BOAT ABOUT 1700 HOURS (SEE REFTEL). THIS NO ULTIMATUM WAS EVER GIVEN TO MARINER.

B. THERE WERE NO REPAT NO ISRAELI HELICOPTERS IN THE AREA DURING THE NIGHT. FURTHER, IAF INTEL REPORTS (BASED UPON RADAR) THAT THERE WERE NO EGYPTIAN, UN OR OTHER HELICOPTERS IN THE AREA DURING THE NIGHT.

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C. BASED UPON OBVIOUS USG CONCERN COMMANDER OF ISRAELI NAVY, AT APPROXIMATELY 0100 LOCAL (2300Z) GAVE ORDER TO BREAK OFF ALL EXERCISES AND FOR ALL REPEAT ALL PATROL BOATS TO RETURN TO AT TUR HARBOR. THIS ORDER ALSO APPLIED TO BOAT PREVIOUSLY MONITORING MARINER. BOATS IMMEDIATELY COMMENCED BOYAGE WHICH IS ESTIMATED TO HAVE REQUIRED ABOUT TWO HOURS. THUS,BY 0300 LOCAL (0100Z) ALL BOATS WERE IN HARBOR.

D. AT 0140 LOCAL (2340Z) A REPORT WAS SENT TO GHQ THAT MARINER HAD COMMENCED MOVING TO WEST. THIS WAS A SPS-55 RADER REPORT. BY 0230 MARINER WAS WEST OF MEDIAN LINE.

E. CHIEF OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE STATES "THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT SUCH MESSAGES FROM AMOCO WERE FALSE." IN HAS DEFINITE REPEAT DEFINITE KNOWLEDGE THAT AMOCO SKIPPERS HAVE LIED IN PAST WHEN IT WAS IN THEIR INTEREST TO DO SO".

3. IDF REPS NOTED THAT EGYPTIAN RADAR CAPABILITY IS SUCH THAT THEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO CONFIRM THAT NO HELICOPTERS WERE IN AREA. EGYPTIANS, THEY SAID, WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE ABLE TO CONFIRM ANY IDF PATROL BOAT ACTIVITY BY RADAR AS BOATS ARE TOO SMALL.

4. COMMENT: ALL IDF REPS AT MEETING REITERATED THAT US HAD BEEN PROVIDED ABSOLUTE TRUTH AT BOTH MEETINGS. DURING MEETING THIS MORNING, CONTACT WAS MADE WITH IAF HELICOPTER BASE, NAVAL CMDR IN RED SEA AREA AND AT TUR BASE FOR REPEATED CONFIRMATION OF ABOVE REPORT.
TOON

NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED DIA.

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